THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Government have acquired the Landing Platform Dock (LPD) USS Trenton and UH-3H Helicopters from the US Government. These were commissioned into the Indian Navy in June 2007 as INS Jalashwa. Government have also signed Letters of Offer and Acceptance for the procurement of weapons and equipment required by the Special Forces of the Indian Army and for six C-130J-30 aircraft for the Indian Air Force. The C-130J-30 aircraft are the latest variant of the C-130 aircarft and are different from the aircraft being operated by Pakistan.

Continuous increase in trade deficit

113. SHRI M.V. Mysura Reddy: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that trade deficit of our country is continuously increasing;

(b) whether it is also a fact that India's balance of payment is not favourable;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the specific reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of steps taken by Government to increase out exports and improve balance of payment in the national interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The major reasons for increase in trade deficit can be attributed to the increase in the import of capital goods and raw material due to strong demand from manufacturing sector and also increase in the prices of petroleum products. As a proportion of GDP and on balance of payment (BOP) basis, trade deficit fell from a level of 2.7 per cent in 2000-01 to reach 2.1 per cent in 2002-03. The proportion has risen thereafter and reached a level of 6.9 per cent in 2006-07. With growing surpluses on invisibles account and capital inflows exceeding current account deficits, India's BOP situation remained comfortable.

(d) It is the endeavour of the Government to promote exports through initiatives in accordance with the provisions under the Foreign Trade Policy (2004—09) and its Annual Supplement. These measures are aimed at accelerating India's exports in line with its comparative advantage and the emerging situation in the domestic and international market.

Industrial units set up in the public sector

†114. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise number of large and medium industrial units set up in the public sector as on date;

(b) the number of units out of these which are export oriented;

(c) whether Government propose to set up more export oriented units;

(d) if so, the State-wise details thereof; and

(e) the details of the programme formulated for the current financial year in this regard?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi